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S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 BAGHDAD 002413

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TAGS: [MOPS](#) [PTER](#) [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [IZ](#)  
SUBJECT: JULY 19 MALIKI-PETRAEUS MEETING

Classified By: Pol-Mil Counselor Marcie Ries. Reasons: 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (S) SUMMARY: MNF-I Commanding General Petraeus told PM Maliki on July 19 that there were signs of progress on the security front, including the recent death or capture of 12 Al Qaeda leaders in South Baghdad and the clearing of Baqubah. Maliki said he wanted to send a strong signal by traveling to Baqubah. Maliki also laid out some principles to guide efforts at tribal engagement, such as the need to vet tribal police recruits and the importance of a "balanced" police force in mixed areas. He also discussed a possible amnesty policy for members of tribes, as well as a similar policy for insurgent and militia members. Petraeus reported on his recent conversation with VP Tariq al-Hashimi in which he stressed the need for progress on the political front. In discussing the draft hydrocarbon-related legislation, Maliki argued that it was very good for the Sunnis and that it was the Shias which had compromised in order to try to reach a deal. END SUMMARY

Signs of Progress; Maliki Wishes to Visit Baqubah  
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¶2. (S) In a July 19 meeting with PM Maliki, MNF-I Commanding General Petraeus noted several areas of progress in the security sphere. He told Maliki that a dozen top Al Qaeda leaders in the Baghdad area had recently been killed or captured. He also said that he thought the clearing operation in Baqubah was going well, although challenges still remained in other parts of Diyala province. He added that he also saw signs of progress in the Falluja area, north of which coalition forces were clearing Karmah and other villages in which AQI still has a presence.

¶3. (S) Picking up on Petraeus' statement about success in Baqubah, Maliki said that he would like to send a strong message by traveling to Baqubah. Petraeus promised the Coalition's assistance in making the trip happen. (Note: LTG Odierno will take the PM to Baqubah on July 26.)

Tribal Engagement: Maliki's Principles  
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¶4. (S) When Petraeus reported that a July 18 Baghdad Police Summit had examined the need for additional police and the possibility of recruiting them locally, Maliki used the opportunity to discuss larger issues related to efforts to engage tribes and other armed groups. He began by noting that in areas that were entirely Sunni or entirely Shia, it made sense to recruit a police force that was homogeneous and reflective of the area's ethno-sectarian composition. (Note: As an aside Maliki cited the Iraqi constitution to argue that

similar efforts could not be done with the Iraqi Army. Petraeus said the Army should remain professional and non-sectarian.) Maliki said that areas that were mixed, however, should have an "ethnically balanced" police force, warning against over-recruitment from particular tribes simply because they were being engaged. Petraeus agreed, noting that this was why the Coalition was working with the GOI's National Reconciliation Committee on this effort.

¶5. (S) The PM also stressed the need to properly vet recruits identified by tribal engagement, adding that he did not want criminals or murderers in the police. Petraeus again agreed, noting that the Coalition was using biometric data and a digitized database of Iraqi criminal records to check the recruits. Maliki said the GOI also intended to provide the names of recruits to an intelligence committee for vetting.

¶6. (S) Maliki said that he was considering an amnesty for tribal members that may have had links to terrorist or insurgent groups but who had not been linked to actual killings. He suggested that by giving them amnesty and then bringing them into the security forces he could further split them off from Al Qaeda and other irreconcilable groups. He also said that he might consider a similar program for members of insurgent or militia groups, but that they would have to first prove their willingness to cooperate and support the government: they would have a period where they were "on probation."

Petraeus Pushes VP al-Hashimi  
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¶7. (S) Petraeus said that he had told VP Tariq al-Hashimi that while progress was being made in the military sphere,

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the Coalition's ability to continue to help Iraq depended heavily on getting enough agreements in the political sphere to give Washington hope. He said that he had also argued that while all three power brokers in the current government\*Shia (SIIC/Dawa), Sunni (Tawaffuq), and Kurd (KDP/PUK)--would lose if an agreement was not reached, the Sunnis may have the most to lose because they might be run out of Baghdad and lose the revenue provided to predominantly Sunni provinces. Maliki agreed that everyone would lose if the political process falls apart.

Maliki on the Hydrocarbon Legislation  
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¶8. (S) Maliki said that the draft hydrocarbon-related legislation was very good for the Sunnis. Petraeus agreed, adding that it was also good for the Kurds. Maliki said that it was the Shia who had been willing to compromise and make concessions in order to reach an agreement.  
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